

ABSTRACT

There is provided a positive resist composition which, during resist pattern formation, can prevent the collapse of very fine resist patterns during the drying step following developing. This positive resist composition is used in a resist pattern formation method comprising a step, within the lithography process, for substituting a liquid remaining on the substrate following alkali developing with a critical drying liquid, and then drying this critical drying liquid by causing passage through a critical state. The positive resist composition comprises a resin component (A), which has an alkali-soluble unit content of less than 20 mol%, contains an acid dissociable, dissolution inhibiting group, and displays increased alkali solubility under action of acid, an acid generator component (B) that generates acid on exposure, and an organic solvent (C) for dissolving the components (A) and (B), and moreover, the component (A) comprises a structural unit (a1) containing an acid dissociable, dissolution inhibiting group, a structural unit (a2) containing a lactone unit, and a structural unit (a3) containing a polycyclic group with an alcoholic hydroxyl group.